

## BRITISH COUNTESS WARREN'S BACKGROUND OF CONFERENCE

## DELEGATES REACH DRAFTING STAGE

British Editor Warns of Premature Conclusions as to Findings.

## TWO ISSUES IN FLUX

China and Naval Question Engage Whole Efforts of Conferees.

## REPLACEMENTS SERIOUS

Experts Object to Naval Holiday, but Public Liking Is Evident.

By WICKHAM STEED.

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 23.—Rumors, statements, counter statements and corrections seem likely to form the substance of conference news for the next few days. On both its main issues the conference has now reached a position in which much discussion of detail and drafting of suggestions will necessarily precede any definite agreement.

What may be called for short the naval question and the Chinese question are undergoing this treatment. Until it is completed no reliable view of the situation will be possible. Meanwhile the public should be on its guard against partial statements, some of which may be the outcome of an artistic desire on the part of newspaper men to provide readable "stories," and others may be attributable to the wish of some delegates to steal a march upon their competitors for public favor.

## Naval Solution May Tarry.

The naval question seems for the moment to be under a cloud. Japan desires, apparently, to obtain an allotment of 70 per cent of battleship strength as compared with the United States and the British Empire. She might ultimately accept 65 per cent, but she is likely to drive a shrewd bargain. Any change in the ratio 55-5 which allotted to Japan 60 per cent of the British and the American battleship strength, would involve complicated adjustments. On this point, therefore, the solution may tarry. A controversy on percentages has begun also between France and Italy. The ratio originally, though not officially, determined for the French and the Italian navies was 2-2, or 40 per cent of battleship strength for each, as compared with 100 per cent for the United States and the British Empire. An announcement, which was apparently authorized by French naval experts, suggested yesterday that France might insist on receiving 50 per cent of battleship or capital ship strength equal to that of Japan, and upon a full quota of submarine tonnage. That announcement roused Italian apprehensions, since Italy had even determined to demand equality with France at whatever ratio of strength the conference may establish. But, under the influence of M. Briand, the Italian announcement has now been qualified, if not entirely withdrawn, and Italian apprehensions are allayed if not removed.

These matters are likely to recur at intervals. They should not disturb public equanimity. Among the larger aspects of the naval question the most important will be the arrangements for the replacement of capital ships. The question of replacement is serious, both intrinsically and because it is intimately connected with the project for a ten year naval holiday. There is reason to believe that American naval experts now see the drawbacks to the naval holiday idea, and understand the importance of graduating the age of battleships, that is to mature for replacement. No one can say whether their advice will be headway against the popular liking for the idea of a complete naval holiday, but it is evident that any modification of this idea must come from the Americans themselves.

When the Chinese question is approached this fluidity is accentuated. The American public are less familiar with the complexities of the Chinese puzzle than with the main data of the naval question. On Tuesday, for instance, the committee on the Far East, with the Chinese tariff issue and took into consideration what would appear to be some thoroughly misleading arguments in regard to the Chinese maritime customs.

## Gayly Ignores Facts.

The form in which these arguments are put before the public by some American writers to-day makes it seem as though all that was needed to solve the prosperity of China would be to substitute Chinese for the foreign personnel in the customs administration and to abolish restrictions upon Chinese freedom to raise the tariff to any desirable height. This illogical conclusion is reached by the Chinese themselves. Undoubtedly, from the standpoint of Chinese officials, there would be great advantage in the provision of opportunities for a display on a larger scale of their integrity in handling public moneys; but from the standpoint of the conference, one of whose main tasks is to restore conditions that cannot only be called, but will be, China, suggestions of this kind serve only to raise doubts whether the Chinese delegation really represent anything but themselves.

Far more important is a statement, that Mr. Root, in the name of the American delegation, has advanced the principle that, since the Powers have recognized the independence and the sovereignty of China, they must also recognize the validity of the treaties concluded by China with various Powers. The adoption of this principle would no doubt facilitate a solution of the Chinese question on paper, while leaving it in substance bristling with the same difficulties as before. On the other hand, if the conference were to declare the validity of all the treaties concluded by China it might sit for months without attaining finality. Probably some middle course will presently be found. Therefore, for the present, the warning I have given against premature conclusions upon the work of the conference holds good in this respect also.

## LOOKING on the conference

President Harding's Most Joyful Thanksgiving Here as Conference Accomplishments Fulfill His Long Cherished Hopes for World Peace.

By EDWIN C. HILL.

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD.

New York Herald Bureau, Washington, D. C., Nov. 23.

For the President of the United States there will be praise and fervent prayers to-morrow. Knowing this and happy over the assured success of his ambition to bring the nations closer together, he will sit down to his turkey and cranberries with some hope even that Congress may acquire from the conference the spirit of accomplishment.

The resonant voices of the peace-makers so completely overwhelmed the wranglings and bickerings of Congress that for two weeks people have scarcely been aware that that body was in session. The doors opened occasionally and released angry voices. Few have listened to ears attuned to the words of earnest men laboring to harmonize a troubled world.

One may be sure that this is the most joyful Thanksgiving the President has known for many years. The holiday sees well toward fruition the idea that blossomed in his mind two years ago in the bitterness of the League of Nations controversy in the Senate. As far back as that he had a glimmering of the idea for an association of nations, a moral understanding among the Allies to keep the peace of the world and to share the practical ideal that thinking men of both parties were invited to Marion in "the conference of great minds."

The President said to this writer more than a year ago: "If I were living in a small town and wanted to get something important done for the good of that town I would not start with a town meeting. I would call together first the men of real influence in that town, try to bring them in agreement about the project and try to get them to work together to bring their influence to bear on the rest of the town." That, of course, is what he has done in summoning the conference. The "men of influence" of Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan and the United States are here in the spirit of the President's conception of how great objects must be attained practically.

The strongest instinct in Mr. Harding is this: "I want to get men to work." Before his election, but in a period of unimpeachable outlook for his success, he revealed the power of his governing instinct, and he got men to work. I do go to the White House my greatest service to the country should be to strive to make all classes, all sections, think better of each other, and then, and then, to do what I could toward spreading this spirit about the world." The conference is the meeting point of the President's ambition and the expectation of peoples everywhere. You recall Emerson's saying that "if the single man plant himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him."

This conference, foreseen dimly by Mr. Harding two years or so ago, developed from the conference at Marion eleven months ago. At that time the President was not certain as to whom he would make Secretary of State. Several men whom he had in mind for the place were called there. Mr. Hughes among them. After Mr. Hughes had departed the President was no longer in doubt who was to be his foreign minister. In Mr. Hughes he had found the man to fit the deed to the crown. The President found the idea and the

## BRIAND, DEPARTING, SAYS HE IS WINNER

Continued from First Page.

Briand paid a long farewell visit to President Harding, which is said to have been of an exceptionally cordial nature. M. Briand's visit to Washington has been successful. In matters of land armaments France has had a free hand from the conference, which has expressed its entire approval of the French position. In Far Eastern affairs France added to her prestige by supporting American ideas and by being the first to offer to give up Chinese spheres of influence. France's offer cleared the way to a settlement of Oriental problems and England duplicated the French proposal.

Finally, France has resisted England's contention that restrictions should be placed on submarines and has avoided all pledges concerning naval disarmament. France was left far behind in naval construction because she used her naval yards for more pressing needs during the war. Here also France is in a special position, and M. Briand intended to let the French Parliament shoulder the responsibility of deciding what is to be the future tonnage of the French navy.

"One great thing has been accomplished," said M. Briand, summing up his opinion on the conference. "We have established contact. We have met and talked things over. People may criticize the conference, but they must admit that it is better than a war. When people get together and talk things over it is not the same as transacting business in other ways."

The French Premier this evening placed the figure of the French colonial army at 180,000 men, but stated that France's colonial army was a special force for specific duties outside France. In talking of land armaments, the Premier said it was necessary to take account of the French army in France—that is, France's metropolitan army. "If you compare the proposed naval cuts with France's army reduction," continued M. Briand, "you will see that France is already doing more on land than has been proposed by the great naval Powers on sea."

"First bear in mind that the rivalry in naval matters is entirely friendly. All the Powers that are cutting their naval programs are on the best of terms. They have no need to fear one another. They can well afford to take the action they propose."

"France, on the other hand, has not one enemy before her but two. She has to keep an army with a definite object in view. She has to face definite hostility from several quarters."

"Nevertheless, whereas the naval Powers do not propose a reduction of more than 30 per cent of their forces, France has already reduced her army by 33 per cent, and purposes soon to reduce it to one-half its pre-war standard."

M. Briand referred to the reduction of the French army service from three years before the war to two years and his proposal still further to reduce the length of service to eighteen months.

## 3 YEAR SERVICE LAW REPEALS IS OPPOSED

French Cabinet Can Reduce Effectives, but Bloc Fights Further Change.

## DOUBTS ARMY LIMITATION

'Temps' Calls It Impossible if One Power Refuses Aid Guaranty.

Special Cable to THE NEW YORK HERALD. Copyright, 1921, by THE NEW YORK HERALD.

New York Herald Bureau, Paris, Nov. 23.

An effort to repeal France's three year military law in favor of a two year service law, to be liberally administered by the Government, is believed here to be foreshadowed by Premier Briand's remarks in Washington concerning France's future army. Comment here supports Premier Briand's defense of France's military position, but as to any reduction in the army further than this, sentiment is greatly divided and a bitter battle in Parliament is certain should Premier Briand attempt any such measure.

In fact, a fight is already pending over the Government's present system whereby two of the latest classes are serving only eighteen months each, although the law itself has not been altered. This has aroused protests from extremists like Gen. Castelnau and Andre Lefevre, members of the Chamber of Deputies, whose interpellations last week were postponed only because Premier Briand was in Washington.

A repeal of the three year service act would really be only a demonstration by France of her pacific purposes, inasmuch as the Government needs no legislation to reduce the actual number of effectives, this being purely an administrative move and depending on how large a part of the three years with the colors is absolutely essential for training and protective duties of the men.

## Bloc Opposes Change.

A large portion of the Bloc National appears opposed to any change in France's fundamental military service laws and, if anything, will be even more so to remove causes of misunderstanding but we must resolve that we will put the best construction and not the worst construction upon each other's motives and actions—until we have absolute evidence of some malicious or unkind motive."

Admiral Lord Beatty is about to make his farewell bow. "Must get back on the job at the Admiralty," he says. With Lord Lee of Fareham, first Lord, also attending the conference, Lord Beatty feels the need to get back on his feet. To-day he finished his work with the naval armaments committee, of which Assistant Secretary of the Admiralty is chairman, and on Friday he will go to New York to attend a luncheon in his honor at the Union Club. Thereafter he will go to Canada, having promised to visit Montreal, Quebec and Ottawa. On November 29 he will sail for England. When he goes Rear Admiral Hugh Rodman will be able not only to himself but to Beatty. Rodman has been his honorary aid. They have been great pals since their days of North Sea service.

With the departure of Premier Briand to-morrow morning the conference loses one of its principal figures, a personality that has magnetized attention from the outset. The French feel that Briand has strengthened an already strong position at home and that he takes back to Paris a very agreeable message for the French people. The willard, where the French are quartered, there is a notion that the tension between Great Britain and France has been noticeably lessened. It will be a crowded day in New York for the Premier, with luncheon with the Consul General of his country, reception of degrees from New York and Columbia universities and dinner at the Lotus Club.

He placed the number of men in a year's army class at 250,000, which will make France's future army of one class and a half amount to 375,000 men, to which may be added the colonial army of 180,000.

M. Briand denied to THE NEW YORK HERALD that France's submarine policy was directed against England.

"Ask England," said the French Premier, "what she needs her capital ships for. Are they directed against France? I would not do her the injustice to say so. All the other great naval nations are friendly to her and yet she wants 500,000 tons in capital ships. What for? These capital ships are an aggressive force, whereas submarines are defensive weapons. England does not need great vessels against Germany—for Germany has no navy—nor against Russia. Nor are they useful for arduous fishing. This is, of course, that they are directed against X—the unknown."

## MONARCHY'S RETURN FEARED BY 'VORWAERTS'

French Military Policy Is Blamed for Reaction.

Berlin, Nov. 23 (Associated Press).—The reactionary forces in Germany, says *Vorwaerts*, the Socialist organ, are being strengthened by France's military policy and "constant heckling of Germany." The newspaper asserts that it fears a monarchistic or nationalistic revival, which will overthrow the country's hard won democracy.

"The only real disarmament," the newspaper continues, "must be of spirit, and this applies particularly to the French. The Washington conference cannot do it, for the eyes of the Americans will be turned toward the Far East, and not toward Europe. Chaos came with America's help to Europe, and order cannot be restored without American assistance. But the United States seems to have lost interest, giving the French nationalists an opportunity to extend their influence over the whole of Europe."

"What is needed is not a disarmament conference but a new peace conference. German workmen never want to see war again, but injustice and a search for vengeance is a false foundation upon which to build a peace structure."

## U. S. ENVOY CALLS ON GERMAN.

Paris, Nov. 23.—Diplomatic relations between the American and German embassies here, which were broken off in 1917, were reestablished when Ambassador Herrick made a formal call on Wilhelm Mayer von Kauffmann, Mr. Herrick took the initiative in view of Herr von Kauffmann's diplomatic seniority in Paris.

COPENHAGEN, Nov. 23.—Dr. John D. Prince, the new American Minister to Denmark, presented his credentials to-day and was received for an hour's audience with King Christian.

## NEW ZEALAND SUPPORTS TREATY WITH JAPAN

No Justification for Scrapping It Seen.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 23 (Associated Press).—New Zealand stands behind Australia in its favoring of the Anglo-Japanese treaty for the present, at least, or until "a more comprehensive system" for guaranteeing the peace of the Far East has been found.

"We see no justification for scrapping that alliance without substituting something for it," declared a spokesman for New Zealand to-day.

"Japan gave a faithful and valuable service in the dangerous times of war," he added, "and we owe her our gratitude for it. It is not the English nor the American who turn our backs on a friend. If, and when some more general agreement can be entered into for the preservation of the peace of the Pacific, New Zealand and Australia will welcome it as a substitute for the present imperfect system."

## DEFENDS FRANCE'S NAVAL CONTENTIONS

Georges Le Chartier Asserts Her Stand for Submarines Is Justified.

By GEORGES LE CHARTIER.

Correspondent Journal Desbats.

Special Despatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD.

New York Herald Bureau, Washington, D. C., Nov. 23.

An article which was published in a morning newspaper yesterday announcing a sensational naval programme of France has given birth to many conflicting stories during the day, and, although denied in an official statement of M. Briand this morning, it seems to have been particularly resented in British quarters. The misunderstanding must not last.

I do not think that I misquote one of the best spokesmen of the British delegation if I summarize as follows what he said in the lobby of the New Willard to-day:

"France had better be careful. I am one of the best friends of France. But it is impossible for the best friends of France in my country to overlook what she is doing or trying to do now. M. Briand of course was quite right when he spoke last Monday of the land forces which France is obliged to keep. There is nothing to be added to what Mr. Balfour said on the subject. But when M. Briand, speaking of the French navy, insists now that France must have more and more submarines, we cease to be appreciative or indifferent. We do not want France to arm herself against England."

I could only repeat what had been said to me by one of the men in the best position to know to the effect that: "First, the article, according to Mr. Balfour, was not accurate. But had the article been a strict enumeration of facts, how could any unprejudiced Briton infer that the French submarines were to be built in an aggressive spirit and with an ultimate thought of war against England? A nation must look for safe defense according to her geographical position and to her financial means. France has two coasts to protect, but she has neither reason nor thought of protecting them against England. She has still less reason or thought of ever attacking England."

It is a fact that Germany has now no navy, and France has certainly not at the present moment, to fear any naval attack from her. But Germany, according to the Versailles treaty, which is still recognized by England, will be allowed to possess some navy after a certain period. Why should not France be allowed to have one without waiting for Germany to have hers? And is Germany or England to limit the size of the only naval aggressor that France may fear? Has not England herself a fleet?

But France has no thought that this fleet is specially kept to be turned some time against her. Moreover, France has a Mediterranean coast, which is exposed to any attack and which she must protect. It is she who chooses the submarines for means of protection rather than capital ships. It is only, as M. Briand stated, because submarines are the weapons of the weak."

France, after five years of exhausting war on her own soil, does certainly not profess to be as strong as Mr. Balfour emphatically declared, a week ago, that France is. So it is not unfair if France should be allowed to choose her own means of protection and self defense according to her own needs and resources. Has not England and the same way without incurring any protest or suspicion from France, and are the means chosen by her in any way less defensive, less terrible than the French fleet?

## ROME PAPER ATTACKS BRIAND'S 'FANTASY'

'Epocha' Hopes Americans Are Not Deluded by Him.

Rome, Nov. 23 (Associated Press).—The hope that Americans "are not so glibly and deluded as to take seriously M. Briand's fantasy" that there are 2,000,000 of armed men in Russia and Germany to guard against," is expressed by the *Epocha*.

"There is only one threatening army in Europe, namely, the French," says the paper. "It is well to remember that France has the monopoly of iron in Europe. She has taken mines from Germany and given them to the Poles, and has also forced Germany to enter into Franco-German combine controlled by the French."

"M. Briand says France does not pursue the road to military hegemony in Europe," the *Epocha* continues, "but when he is permitted to refuse to disarm 500,000 French soldiers and 400,000 Poles it guarantees French economic and military hegemony. An attempt by 25,000,000 French to hold in slavery 250,000,000 Russians and Germans cannot but start a new war with arms which the most horrible hate can devise."

## TINKHAM WOULD HALT NAVAL AGREEMENT

Would Wait for Abrogation of Anglo-Japanese Treaty.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 23 (Associated Press).—A resolution providing that the United States shall not enter into a final agreement relative to limitation of naval armaments until the Anglo-Japanese treaty of 1911 is abrogated or "without a definite understanding of its immediate abrogation" was introduced to-day by Representative Tinkham, Republican (Ohio).

The resolution characterizes the treaty as a military alliance, offensive and defensive, between Great Britain and Japan and "in conflict with the entire spirit" of the American proposal made at the opening session of the arms conference for a reduction of naval armaments and a ten year naval holiday.

## SAY FRANCE NEEDS NO MORE BIG SHIPS

Deputies Surprised at Report She Is Asking for 300,000 Tons.

## CHAMBER WOULD OPPOSE

Economy Demanded as, With Germany Bankrupt, France Faces Ruin.

By LAWRENCE HILLS.

Special Cable to THE NEW YORK HERALD. Copyright, 1921, by THE NEW YORK HERALD.

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Great surprise was expressed in the corridors of the Chamber of Deputies to-day over reports from Washington that the French delegation there was asking for permission to construct up to 300,000 tons of capital ships instead of holding to the programme for light vessels, the construction of which already has been approved by the Chamber of Deputies, and which is considered the maximum possible for France in the present state of her finances.

Coming simultaneously with the close of the final debate on the financial situation the effect of the Washington despatches was all the more striking as one after another of the Deputies arose to demand a policy of strictest economy, one of them even admitting that Germany's feared bankruptcy threatens the ruin of France to such an extent that the whole financial question must be taken up in Washington.

## France Fought for World.

"Why do we not remind them that in 1914 France fought for the whole world?" asked Deputy Candace. "That is the reason our total debt to-day reaches the staggering figure of 264,000,000,000 francs."

What politicians here cannot understand is why there should be any suggestion regarding the building of capital ships after the work of demolition of the five which were started before the war has already commenced and only one of these is to be completed as an airplane carrier.

With financial problems for the next five years, and perhaps longer, still a matter of grave concern, any effort to obtain Parliament's approval of a great building programme such as equalling Japan's capital ship tonnage would meet with tremendous opposition both in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. In fact, it was only with difficulty that the consent of the Chamber of Deputies was obtained at a time when in the flush of victory the French believed Germany was going to pay for everything for the building of six light cruisers of about 8,000 tons each, twenty-four medium sized torpedo destroyers and thirty-six submarines of varying sizes, these being considered sufficient to control France's coasts and to protect her lines of communications with her colonies better than unwieldy dreadnoughts.

## Tonnage for Bargaining.

It was suggested here to-day that the effort of the French delegation in Washington to obtain capital ship tonnage may have been merely for bargaining purposes, the semi-official *Temps* this afternoon declaring:

"France is ready to make serious concessions along the lines of the Hughes plan, as she only wants a defensive fleet. Consequently she will be ready to use the tonnage allotted her in the construction of submarines and light cruisers."

This attitude on the part of France

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## URGE DEBT LIQUIDATION.

In a message sent yesterday by the board of directors of the American Manufacturers' Export Association to Secretary Hughes hope was expressed that the spirit prevailing at the Washington conference will provide helpful remedies for other serious international questions, such as the liquidation of debts and the stabilization of exchange. The board said it was impressed that it is through cooperation among nations that the burden of armaments may be reduced."

was confirmed by a high placed naval officer this afternoon. He declared that few French naval officers would be found who would support any programme involving the construction of capital ships costing millions of francs each. "Inasmuch as the war lessons taught the undeniable superiority of the smaller vessels in sea as coast protection was concerned."

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FIFTH AVENUE

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